

REMARKS

In the Office Action¹, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 6, and 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Golden et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,272,127, hereafter “Golden”), allowed claims 11-23, and objected to claims 3-5 and 8-10 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim.

By this Amendment, Applicants cancel claims 1 and 6, without prejudice or disclaimer, and amend claims 2-4 and 7-9. Claims 2-5 and 7-23 remain pending.

Applicants acknowledge the Examiner’s indication that claims 11-23 are allowable, and that claims 3-5 and 8-10 contain allowable subject matter. Applicants have rewritten claims 3 and 8 to include all the elements of claims 1 and 6, from which claims 3 and 8 formerly depended, respectively. Accordingly, claims 3 and 8 are allowable. Claims 2, 4, 5, 7, 9, and 10 depend from claims 3 or 8, and are also allowable at least due to their dependence.

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application and the timely allowance of the pending claims.

¹ The Office Action contains a number of statements reflecting characterizations of the related art and the claims. Regardless of whether any such statement is identified herein, Applicants decline to automatically subscribe to any statement or characterization in the Office Action.

Customer No. 22,852
Application No. 10/648,092
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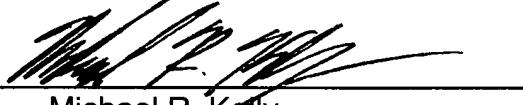
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Respectfully submitted,

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